

BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

A. J. Parker
Highland East Side
Sept 12

Spartacus Converted

(By Joseph Rogers.)

(Spartacus, long in the pay of the church as an assassin of progress, sees the "light" and is saved.)

"Ye call me chief, and ye do well,
To call him chief who, twelve long years
In the bloody shambles of a hell
Has steel'd his heart, and dried his tears
So cries of war would sobbs of love repel."

"The smitten friend whose pleading look
Was lit to wave my bloody hand
From off the soul that, slow, forsook
Its clay to find oblivion in the sand,
Was Roman prey; and slaves! his life I took."

"The shades of men who felt my stroke
Do fill my nights with fear and grief;
I hear adieus the heroes spoke,
And weaklings begging for relief,
Before my sword across their guard had broke."

"No more for me the fearful strife,
That makes of earth a tiger's lair;
I'll draw no triumphs from the knife
But start to heal, and cease to tear
The vitals of the suffering human life."

Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Atheist's Reason and the Christian's Faith

Strong Article in Reply to Harold Bolce's Last Effort Which Was Denied Publication by the Cosmopolitan Magazine.

(By Clarence C. Gates.)

Like the colors of the solar spectrum, the beliefs of the human mind differ by indistinguishable degrees throughout the octave of mental conception. It is just as impossible to mark off a definite dividing line between two contiguous beliefs, as it is hopeless to sharply distinguish between two colors of the spectrum. Our will is not the factor of our belief; but it is the resultant of our physical-mental constitution, heredity, knowledge, and environment.

Will is the center of these factors of our mental life, as the center of gravity is the resultant of a system of weights or weight. Belief has its counterpart in physical weight. The analogy may be further continued. Just as the center of gravity may be known without knowledge of the corresponding weight, so may the will manifest itself, without personal knowledge of our belief. Men in a panic, act as does the water of Niagara, as it flows over the fall, with center of gravity in unstable equilibrium; so is the will of the panic-stricken man. The water flows placidly and turbulently. Men bravely or cowardly face danger, as the weight of all the factors in their life prompt them to act. The Niagara water in the penstock becomes useful. So do men become useful through the resulting intelligence of proper physical-mental constitution, heredity, knowledge, and environment. These are the factors that determine the unalterable position of our will.

Through our egotism, we create mysteries from these simple facts. But, why should we? Why should we deny a fact, proven by every sensible act of our lives, when it cuts the grain of our eager desire? By so doing, do we not confess our selfish stupidity? To declare, that we act and believe as we please in this, is to make manifest, a serious deficiency in more than one factor of our lives. We act as our will acts; i. e., we act as we must. The will originates nothing; it is not free. It is ever the zero mark of free choice. But, free choice is positive; free-will is negative—it does not exist. Free will and free choice are as cold and heat; the first being the absence of the other, and having no meaning, per se.

Fatalism denies both, free will and free choice; denies a fact, (free choice); and a fiction (free will). Rationalism denies the fiction, and affirms the fact. Rationalism is an enlightened selfishness, acting to our best interest, individual and concrete.

Belief is an absolute necessity; it is impossible for us to govern it. It determines our actions, and is the weight-factor of our will. We may not know the weight of a physical object; we may know it, gauged by some standard. We may not know the unconscious belief, by which we act; far better, that we do, gauged by the best material standard we possess. That raises us above the brutes.

In Harold Bolce's article, "Rallying Round the Cross," in September Cosmopolitan, he presents the views of men, who believe, with authority as their standard of mental values. This authority is the Biblical word, and to question its authenticity is to summon Doubt.

The czar of Russia may regard himself as the father to his people. In the father's egotism, will he not deem himself wiser than his children? Does he not resist their advice, restrict their actions, and perform acts disallowed to them? All for the

child's "good." Was there ever an act more plausible?

However, "theory and practice" have distinct meanings. Does not the meaning of the one preclude something in the meaning of the other? Theory is like the winding, rugged path in the wilderness; "theory and practice" is the same path, improved into a trim, smooth thoroughfare. How many of us act by theory, alone? By "theory and practice?" The moralist discovers his "golden rule:" "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." With a mathematician's accuracy, he formulates his calculus of morals, and finds to his dismay, rules—nothing but rules! In other words, anything more than the simple "golden rule" "involves calculation!" The moralist's theory is correct, but his practice—ah, his practice!

The animals of the wilderness made the first path. With a calf's intelligence, it may be followed. The acts and reactions of the human kind produced the first morality. Are we better or worse than the animals? Are we as intelligent?

God? Who is God?

In Mr. Bolce's article, are these sentences: "The colleges say that God is not gratified by praise; that he is not moved by adulation," to which the churches reply:

"Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
My Great Redeemer's praise."

Do the colleges know? Has "God" spoken? Do we flatter, to cheat or to encourage? "Both," replies a man, modestly hiding his face from the gleam of Diogenes' lantern. Again: "To kneel and adore is the noblest posture of the soul," in which is expressed the opinion of Rev. Augustus Coit. Such an act makes humility manifest. Humility is a minor emotion of the recipient of an undeserved degradation. A slave! Why should mankind place itself in slavery, when its every effort has been toward freedom? The posture of adoration is the "divine right" of a king of his subject. Is "God" less democratic than man?

Theology denies the coequality of man's "spirit," and "God's;" but, can theology analyze either "spirit" with the same accuracy, required by the chemist, working on his elements? If not, is it not vain presumption to "teach plainly that 'God' is something more than gravity?" As to the taunt, that man has no power over the Pleiades, let the answer be, "Knowest thou God?" Does doubt enter your heart? Do you doubt your "God," the rules of arithmetic, the theorems of algebra, or the propositions of geometry?

"But the Christian still looks with the eyes of faith to the spiritual city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." To which, trite answer may be made: "God made the country, man made the city." Is it not strange, that we have not seen the only city God has made? Can we dislodge the doubt of its existence? Is not belief a necessity, and necessity the mother of reason? Can we believe, whether or no, when doubt strongly and strangely infringes upon belief?

What is faith? Is it not belief upon trust? The Chinese wall seems to us, to be a wonderful thing. Most of us have never seen it, or followed its length. Nevertheless, we believe it to exist. Does doubt enter our mind? We have the physical opportunity of quieting or confirming the doubt. Has the Christian the same physical opportunity, to quiet or confirm his doubt of "God," and superhuman existence? Will he as readily as the intelligent explorer, submit to intelligent doubt of his assertions? We know, do we not, that a wonderful fact may be

doubted, and a wonderful fiction believed? We know, do we not, that belief is not evidence? Why should we wilfully confess ourselves to be more stupid than a gull?

Secular faith becomes valid from its dependence upon the physical opportunity of confirmation. Christians, themselves, readily admit that there is no physical opportunity of confirming their statements. Hence, it is self-evident, that secular and spiritual faiths are as widely divergent as the poles of the earth.

"They who have entered into communion with the Father have had revealed to them glimpses of that home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"—for which the proof must be "spiritual," and not secular and physical. But, "spiritual" phenomena, per se, is debatable. The atheist denies their possibility. In this, he has an enormous advantage, for his proofs are purely secular and physical. He uses the secular memory and reason, which guides our every-day life, acquires our knowledge, and marks the dim line between sanity and insanity. Shall we desert such a reason, the essential rationalism of our lives, in the final crisis and judgment of argument and common-sense understanding?

The atheist is well satisfied with his arguments, which will not be given here, for an exposition of atheism, per se, is not the purpose of this article. The Christian, admittedly, can not meet the atheist in argument, upon a purely secular basis of reason. The Christian affirms the existence of a personal, "spiritual God." Aside from the bigotry of the middle-age suppression of freedom of thought and discussion, the Christian is helpless to convince the atheist, with the only instrument known to the latter: Secular, every-day, common-sense reason; that is, pure rationalism. In respect to knowledge of a god, the atheist is naturally and unalterably blind. He must be convinced, if convinced at all, by the senses he possesses. Presumably, the Christian is more fortunate, for he claims to see "spiritually"—beside which, with secular reason, the only mental sense of the atheist.

It is not only uncharitable, but vastly, insanely contemptible, to speak of the blind as fools. But, this is just what the writer of Psalms xiv, 1, and liii, 1, did, admitting for the moment, his "spiritual insight." Webster gives a specific meaning to the word, fool? Is the Biblical writer and the modern Christian as charitable?

"Philosophy, the preachers say, may exalt man and his little hour. It may darken counsel by word without knowledge," is true, in a certain sense; but why should the Christian deplore the fact that "philosophy never has proclaimed, but always has waged war on, religions." Philosophy is "the love of learning." The equivalents of learning are the words, wisdom and truth, mentioned in the Bible dozens of times. The absence of these words would be deplored by the Christian, from the Bible. Why should the Christian give double meanings to these words, by excluding philosophy of physical phenomena, solely because it does not lead to preconceived "spiritual" conclusions? "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John viii, 32. What the "golden rule" is to ethics, is this Biblical paragraph of thirteen words to knowledge. The desire to know the truth, or more generally, to know, is philosophy, and is an inbred characteristic of all life. Ignorance is bondage; truth is freedom. Freethought is as necessary for our minds, as pure air is essential for our lungs. Can any Christian rationally convince himself that "there never was a philosophy that gave a promise?" It would be just as rational to withhold our breathing, as to deny the mind's natural craving for the Freethought. The word, promise, as used in the quotation, has a general sense, but where is the Christian who will not give it a definite significance?

"The colleges repudiate the doctrine that man is ransomed by the blood of Christ," but the Christians hold firmly to the dogma, nevertheless. In that, they are consistent, for it is evident that such a teaching is fundamental to Christianity. But, they are

not consistent, in denouncing Judas as a traitor. By the secular reason of the atheist, Judas, to the Christian, should be coequal with Jesus, as the Savior of the world, if savior there was. The reader's attention is again recalled to the title of this article, for an illustration of an essential difference has been given.

The words of Rev. A. E. Keigwin illustrate the same distinction: "The existence of God is not a thought for the reason. The caliber of man's mind is too small to obtain an adequate conception of God." Also: "Redemption without blood, is bread without gluten." To the atheist, the religion of beasts could sink no lower than this admitted position of Christianity. No wonder can be expressed at the bloody conflicts of denominational Christianity in the past, and the bitter contentions of sects of today, once we know the basic position of the followers of Jesus, so-called the Christ. Whatever the college view of the Bible may be, the opinion of the peasant Christian (i. e., belief in the Biblical word from "kiver to kiver") is the only consistent basis of Christianity.

"The churches reply that the scholars of the world will ultimately know that there is but one volume in the library of God, and that, while all things else are vanity and the goodliness thereof as the fading and withering flower and grass of the field, the word of the Lord shall stand forever." Were not Mr. Bolee reporting the opinion and position of the most orthodox portion of the Christian church, we would be justified in stating that what he expressed in the words just quoted, was highly lying. To the atheist, it must appear odd and amusing, since, to him, it reflects a highly lying attitude of the church. That there is "but one volume in the library of God," is odd, when thousands of books are required to contain the useful information and knowledge of the world. That the "volume shall stand forever," is amusing to the atheist, when he considers the nature of some of its parts and passages, which cannot be sent through the mails on a postal card. Which fact should be an offense to the Christian, with credit to him.

"The churches insist that the record in Holy Writ of God's handwriting that spelled doom for sinful Babylon cannot be eliminated by irreverent hands." But, the atheist asks for answers to these questions: Can a city have intelligent personality? Is it more reasonable to punish an individual for his sin, so-called, or punish an impersonal city for the individual's sin? Again, does the atheist's secular reason conflict with the Christian's "spiritual faith," upon Biblical authority.

"And yet, 'it is as true today as it ever was in the history of the race, that the people who will not obey God shall be cut off from being a nation.'" The Jews might be mentioned, but they did not obey God, perhaps? After all, that part of the subject is "too deep" for the "spiritually blind" atheist; and, since what is here written is expositive of the atheist's reason, versus the Christian's faith, the statement will not be denied. However, this is a truce in neutral territory, and not a surrender.

"The most orthodox of the clergy claim that the colleges harbor 'spiritual degenerates'—men with diseased philosophic minds teaching unwitting youth the way that leads, if they care to follow, to the fields of sin." It is manifest that philosophy is not diseased, since that is a "love of learning." Rather, would a denial of philosophy demonstrate the diseased mind. Nor, would any conclusion or knowledge due to philosophy be diseased; for that would be the legitimate province of learning. "Sin," as defined, has a questionable existence; but, assuming it to apply strictly to the negative of Ethics, or human duty, philosophy cannot possibly lead to it, since the "love of learning" and all its fields of exploration are legitimate and rational, beyond any sane doubt. Hence, the use of the words, "spiritual degenerates," by "the most orthodox of the clergy," and defined by Mr. Bolee, as "men with diseased philosophic minds," is an evident absurdity. Philosophy cannot be diseased, even though it be knowledge

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the most dangerous to mankind. Just as there is no obscenity, per se, in any word or object, not placed there by a diseased mind—so there is not a fact in all the universe, that should not be known, and that could not be put to an ill use. The mind of the philosopher is not so fortunately granted immunity from a diseased condition, as is the philosophy of Universal Facts.

"Students go from Christian altars to classes of philosophy. The abandonment of restraint either leads them into fields of folly whose only end is ruin, or, in pathetic search for truth,

they reach lame hands of doubt and say in their perplexity, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' " The Christian conception of love has for its factors, sympathy, merciful authority and restraint. The philosophic love of learning is as fully intense in its sympathy (the essential of love), as is the Christian's adoration. But, the authority and restraint are always the unmerciful factors of learning, placed upon the lover of it.

(To be continued.)

Another Criticism of Dr. Hausman

Taking the Origin and Development of Life From Viewpoint of Henry George Further Discussion is Offered.

(By Dennis Leahy.)

Any book that serves to excite thought, is a good book; and Dr. Hausman's book is certainly calculated to do that. It is evidently designed to rival that greatest of all economic works, "Progress and Poverty." If it makes anything like the stir that Henry George's book has made, the Doctor is in a fair way to win a crown of immortality, and enshrine himself in the minds and hearts of millions of his fellow men.

Henry George has been dead for some time. But he was never so much alive as he is today. England is ringing the changes on his name, while the paramount question of the day is the taxation of the value of the land and the exemption of other forms of property, especially real estate improvements. The liberal party of England has flung a new banner to the breeze, and it bears the soul-inspiring inscription: "The landowner must use his land or pay for holding it idle."

It is inconceivable to me how any sane person can bring himself to believe that more people are born into the world than can find subsistence, and that thousands must perish as a natural consequence, and that only those can hope to survive who are peculiarly fitted to survive and that fitted means mechanically fit, morality does not figure in the case, should ever think of offering a remedy for social or industrial ills. If that stupid doctrine is true, the only sensible thing for the individual to do is, "Get there Eli and let the devil take the hindmost." Because under those conditions there must be a hindmost, and the devil must get him.

The theory has no foundation either in the facts or laws of nature. There is absolutely no limit to man's power to provide subsistence for himself. He can draw upon the earth, air, and water for what he wants,

and he can reproduce and multiply everything he eats and wears to infinity. We are constantly working ourselves into a state of excitement because of over-production. It is the one thing we dread and try to prevent, notwithstanding only a fraction of the people are engaged in producing food and clothing. We might disband the armies and navies were we not afraid that over-production would be the result.

Destitution should not, and would not exist in any city no matter how large it might grow if the natural laws had free play and were not hampered by artificial laws. The notion that cities outgrow the ability of the country to supply raw materials is downright childish. And when we remember that the function of the city is to convert raw material into finished material and distribute the goods, the truth of that assertion ought to be plain to a wooden Indian. The growth of a town is analogous to the growth of a sun in a field of nebulae. And no matter how large a sun may grow it is still surrounded by nebulae.

The theory that organic life originated at a point usually designated by the Darwinian as a single cell, from which life moves out along divergent lines, is a mere guess, a pure conjecture, and it finds no warrant whatever in either the facts or laws of nature.

To say that all forms of organic life have their origin in an egg, is one way of stating the case. To say that all organic life originated in one single cell and radiated from that point, is a different proposition altogether.

There is just about as much diversity of opinion amongst Darwinians in regard to the origin and development of life as there is amongst any other school of thinkers. But to casual observers all Darwinians look alike. Here is what Huxley says: "Looking back through the prodigious vista of the past I find no record of the commencement of life and therefore I am devoid of any means of forming a definite conclusion as to the conditions of its appearance."

Geology is a badly broken record of the life of the crust of the earth. It is most distressingly mutilated by immense upheavals and great subsidence. The layer that ought to be on top is at the bottom and the bottom layer is on top. There are gaps between the layers that can not be filled in. There is no true standard by which to measure the age of the crust and succession is determined by the fossils and by existing species. We are told that the internal heat of the earth at 10,000 feet will boil water. What must the condition be at 130,000—the supposed depth of stratified rock? And what must have been the condition of the surface of the earth one hundred millions of years ago? How is anyone to know how life originated or when it originated?

As with geology so with paleontology. It is also a badly broken record full of gaps. It yields no warrant whatever for Hausman's theory of the origin of life. The first great gap occurs between invertebrate and vertebrate life. The earliest known vertebrate being a highly organized fish. We have the beginning and the end but the middle is missing; and so it goes all the way up the line. It is always the transitoral form that is missing. The Darwinian tries to convey the impression that only one link is missing. As a matter of fate the missing links are too numerous to mention. The following facts are established by geology and paleontology. At one time the earth was swarming with an infinite profusion of crustaceans of infinite variety. At another time the waters swarmed with fish of infinite profusion and variety.

At another time an infinite variety of reptiles swarmed over the earth then came mammals. Then the primates. This is the age of primates and we have still got fish reptiles, mammals in profuse variety. But no transitoral forms. The transitoral business stopped just about the time it commenced. There is absolutely no evidence to show that life originated as a single cell and moved out along divergent lines. The evidence proves that life began

with an infinite profusion and infinite variety of forms.

During what is known as the carboniferous age the earth was covered with primaeval forests. There can be no question about the infinite variety and profusion of vegetable forms of that age. And there can be no question but what contraction has seriously affected both variety and profusion, which is altogether contrary to the Darwinian theory of the origin of life.

I have no desire whatever to under-value the service of the Darwinian or to ignore a single fact adduced. But, conjecture is not fact. The evidence shows an ever increasing complexity of form but it also shows that the complexity is at the expense of quantity, which is entirely foreign to the Darwinian theory of the origin and development of life. While it serves to utterly destroy the Malthusian theory, it is in strict conformity with the fact that propagation falls as the form rises, and rises as the form falls.

All the primitive forms of life are still in existence. They have reproduced them-

selves for countless generations without in any way being affected by either hereditary transmission, natural selection, or the survival of the fittest. And this is all the more remarkable when we remember that the higher form draw subsistence from the lower forms even to the extent of consuming them for food.

In spite of heredity and the survival of the fittest, everything reaches a limit of expansion and then yields to contraction. Everything rises and falls, ebbs and flows, progresses and retrogrades.

Life is one huge pyramid with boundless space and limitless matter for its basis. Its sides are made up of arrested species and forms that have reached the limit of their development. Man is at its apex with the Anglo-Saxon at the very top, while the sides at the top are formed of arrested and extinct races and civilizations. Shall we retain this exalted position, or, in due course yield it to a fitter race? Nature determines who is the fittest to crown her work. And the victor must be morally fit.

bracing history, traditions, allegories, fables, laws, religion, philosophy, poetry, public addresses and so-called prophecies (really priestly oracles). Much of the history in the bible is doubtless true, but often there is such an intermingling of true history and tradition that it is not easy or possible always to distinguish between them, except that we may reasonably conclude that the record of miracles and unreasonable occurrences in incorporated with historical facts are not true.

But the bible is valuable and may be read and studied with interest and benefit.

In the first place, it is a very old book, and much of the reverence with which it is regarded is owing to this fact. It shows us what people in the long ago thought and believed about many things, as for instance, the origin of the universe, the origin of man, their idea of god, life and many other questions. We see what kinds of government and laws those people had; what they were mentally morally and socially. We learn what progress they made in art, science and literature; what their manners and customs were, and many things that it is both interesting and useful for those now living to know.

It is remarkable, of course, that these writings have survived and come down to us, but there are other writings in the world which are as old, if not even older than the Hebrew scriptures, and their preservation is equally remarkable. So far as I am able to judge, there is nothing in the Scriptures but what could have been written by intelligent, educated human beings. Most that we know about the sciences we have not learned from the bible, but by human thought, research, investigation and painstaking observation. And it is to science, and not to the bible, that we must still look for the solution of the great problem of human life and destiny.

Kanawha Falls, Md.

Heartily Favors the Plan.

LOUISVILLE, KY.—In response to the call in the Blade of Aug. 15, that Free-thinkers write the Blade and express their opinions regarding a National Organization of Freethinkers, I will give mine on the questions submitted: 1. I favor a national organization of Freethinkers, and will do all that is possible for me to help make it a success. 2. If I am financially able. 3. Cincinnati, I think would be the most suitable place; the date is immaterial to me. 4. Yes, if I find that the declaration of principles are in accordance with my views. Hoping that you may receive enough favorable replies to warrant calling a meeting. I remain, yours fraternally.—OSCAR B. JANICKE.

A Common Sense View of the Bible

**Strange It Is that a God Would Authorize
a Production and Furnish Us with
Brains to Reason and Lead
Us to Unbelief.**

(By J. C. Watkins.)

The book called the Bible, which is in reality, a collection of books or writings, has come down to us from the past.

The part of the book known as the Old Testament was written at various times and by different persons prior to the beginning of the present era, and in a language which is now not spoken or used to much extent.

The several books of the New Testament were written or produced for the most part during the early centuries of the present era, and in what is long since a dead language. Our English version of the Bible is therefore a translation from the language or languages in which these scriptures were formerly written. We take for granted that the translation is approximately correct, though, of course, not absolutely so. We are told by theologians that this bible as we have it is the word of god—a revelation, inspired and infallible, and that it is the only authoritative rule of faith and practice. Many of us cannot believe this, though we regard the bible as a useful book, if not regarded with a superstitious reverence, as it is by many very good people.

In the first place, a revelation from god

as Thomas Paine contended, would have to be made directly to each individual, or it would not be a revelation to those who received it at second-hand. We do not know certainly that there is any personal god or supreme being, but nearly every person believes in a great Eternal Intelligent, Beneficent Energy, or Force in the Universe and in Nature, which is continually revealing itself to human consciousness. But even if there is a personal god in the sense most people understand that word, it is scarcely probable that he would only reveal himself and his will in a written work like the bible. If god wrote or authorized the bible, he also made our brains and endowed us with the thinking power or faculty. Why then, do not these two creations of god always agree? Why must we believe contrary to all our senses often in order to believe some things stated in scripture?

Regarded as a purely human creation, production or work, the bible is natural and understandable. It is only when we regard it as a supernatural production that it becomes incomprehensible and irreconcilable with what we know to be true.

Examining this book in the light of reason, and getting our minds as far as possible from prejudice and bias, we find that the bible is a collection of books or writings by various authors at different times and under various circumstances. Apparently, the Old Testament scriptures is a collection of Hebrew literature, em-

Judge Ladd Gets His, Too

Scientific Socialist Criticizes His Recent Review of Historical and Declaratory Socialism.

(By J. A. Robertson.)

I would respectfully ask you for space in the Blade for a brief comment on an article by Judge Parish B. Ladd published by you in the issue of the 10th instant under the caption of "Historical and Declaratory Socialism," in which the writer attempts to show the origin and present teachings of that organization. I will state at the outset that, being but a lay member of the Socialist party, it is with more or less trepidation I assume to challenge the statements made by one whose title is "Judge," small or great, but I am not satisfied to have erroneous statements put off upon the public as true when their falsity is so patent that even one who does not lay claim to be other than an ordinary reader and reasoner can see it. But I do claim to know a little about scientific Socialism as to its origin and purposes, and must say that of all attempts I have ever heard to expose the teachings of Socialism, in support of capitalism and competition the Judge's article takes the cake.

He tells us that at least two attempts have been made to establish Socialist societies and both were entire failures. If he had said that scores of attempts had been made to establish Utopian Socialism resulting in failures he would have been nearer right. But great heavens! Doesn't he know the difference between Utopian Socialism or communism and modern scientific Socialism? If he doesn't then permit me to suggest that he read as a primary initiative to a more exhaustive treatise, "Common Sense of Socialism," by John Shargo, or Vail's "Scientific Socialism," and after he has assimilated these books, he might continue the investigation of the subject by reading "Morals of Socialism" by Chas. H. Kerr; also "After Capitalism What?" by W. T. Brown; "Introduction to Socialism," by N. A. Richardson. Then if he desires stronger meat, I would suggest he read Marx's Capital and Socialism—A New World Movement, by Unterman. There are hundreds of other books and tracts that can almost be had for the asking of the Wilshire Book Co., New York.

If Judge Ladd is really desirous of championing the cause of capitalism and at the same time to expose the fallacies (?) of Socialism or co-operation let him first of

all know his premises by becoming acquainted with the primary principles of the subject he attempts to discuss. It is nothing less than ridiculous for him to state as a fact that Socialism is in any way related to communism or anarchy. No Socialist writer advocates the confiscation of the property of the rich to distribute among the poor. Dismissing the French Commune as in no way connected with modern Socialism I desire his attention to the error of his statement, that because the workingmen would be the officials of the nation under Socialism that therefore anarchy would reign supreme. A general smash-up of all the industries as well as the state. Why? Who runs our industries today? Are they now run by the owners of the machinery of industry or by the workers? Would workmen be less capable of running a train of cars if under their management and ownership than under private ownership? If so, why? No, Judge, your idea that the workingmen must have masters to serve is but the repetition of what the ruling class has said since the days of barbarism—a relic of the darkest of the Dark Ages. Please come down along the pathway of the upward struggle of humanity for freedom from priest and king and learn who it has always been that bore the brunt of battle.

For the first time in the history of the world the workers of the world are uniting, not to rob and pillage, but for the establishment of a just and equitable industrial system in which he who labors—produces something useful for his fellow-men—shall be the owner of such product, and shall not be compelled, as under private ownership or capitalism, to give three-fifths of such products to a master in the shape of profits.

Again, let me urge you, Judge, to get right in your discussion of modern Socialism by informing yourself in its principles. If private ownership is to be preferred to the social ownership and control, then thousands would be glad to have it shown and proven to them.

Judge Ladd, I suppose, will admit that whatever our social condition is, it is the fruitage of private ownership. If all is sub rosa then there is nothing to do but point to the system and say "there it is—a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

You intimate, though you do not directly say it, that because all capitalistic governments have declared in favor of private ownership of the means of production that therefore it is one of nature's laws, and

right. Antiquity of ideas does not make them true or right.

The time was when it was not popular nor even safe for one to say the earth is a sphere, when the priests, and everybody as to that matter, said "It's flat, you can see it with your own eyes." "Yes," said the slaves, "It's flat—we can see for ourselves."

The divine right of priests and kings was just as "natural" as the "natural right" of private ownership of the capitalist. The curse of private ownership is that it takes the substance of life of the workers and gives it to the non-producer. Our coal-fields, our mines, the entire earth and what it holds for the race is taken over by a handful of men who say: "All this is mine—we are the masters." And Judge Ladd says "Amen."

Anniston, Ala.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

(By The Chaplain.)

You've heard the story preachers tell
About a virgin's child,
Whose father was a holy ghost—
A "Bible reading" wild—
And even Joseph doubted
Till he had a ghostly dream;
I'll tell you private what I think:
The story's awful mean.

You've heard them tell about his wounds,
When stretched upon the cross—
About his saving sinners' souls if
They would let him boss;
You've heard about those heavenly streets,
With pavements laid with gold,
And seen the contribution box
That takes it in to hold.

You've heard about their phantom god
Upon a "great white throne,"
That's reached through gates of pearl ajar
By Christian souls alone—
By Christians here who never think
Of Nature's wonder life,
Resistless when she trembles, yawns,
Relentless in the strife.

You've heard these things, and cast aside,
Yet Christians pray and pray,
Through crucifixion of the mind
In plastic childhood's day.
You know all fables preachers tell,
And know them all as lies,—
Get in and fight with dynamite,
Or thought where Freedom flies.

Still Favor the New Organization

Additional Correspondence Showing How American Freethinkers Approve of Organizing as Blade Suggests.

In our next previous issue we gave a number of letters from Freethinkers in which there were shown a unanimous expression in favor of the proposed new organization. While the bulk of those writing are indifferent as to time and place of the proposed meeting, three have voted in favor of Cincinnati, five in favor of St. Louis, two in favor of Cleveland. The only dates suggested are October 3 and 17, 1909. The majority will be unable to attend the meeting, both from distance, financial conditions and others from age and bodily infirmity. As an incentive for others to write their views on this important subject, the following additional letters are now given:

For Organization with big "O."

ST. LOUIS.—I have long been interested in that proposition of yours to form an Association of Freethinkers, but have neglected writing just because of urgent duties nearer home.

Query 1.—Yes, I do favor Organization, with a big O.

Query 2.—Will attend national meeting if at all possible.

Query 3.—Place? Of course, I would prefer St. Louis, but I think Cincinnati most appropriate place. The Ohio river seems to throw up a lot of infidels in that region.

Query 4.—Date? Any time. The earlier the better.

Query 5.—I certainly will become a member if it is a Freethought Association.

I favor a very broad association; one that can become as strong as are the Free Masons. I would suggest a secret organization with degrees. It should have a social side and should deal in morals and religion—not much politics. Freethinkers of the World (or Freethinkers of America—later to become Freethinkers of the World) would not be a bad name. The term covers a multitude of ideas and could take in a large membership.

I, for one, know that the parties at the head of the Blade have no selfish interest in this matter, and I do not favor making the Blade a party organ.

I will not join any organization terming itself a church, or with the word church appearing in its title.

If meeting should be held in this city, I am sure our German friends here will allow us the free use of their hall; how-

ever, I suppose we could obtain a free hall in most any large city.

Yours very truly,

(MISS) ELIZABETH WILEY.

Will Join and Help.

PERRIS, CALIF.—In your late issue you want an expression from Freethinkers in reference to organization. I certainly would like to see an organization, with a strong central point and branches in all the large cities of the states. I am too old and also afflicted to be of active use; I am in my 83rd year and afflicted with asthma. I will join an organization and contribute one dollar monthly, at least, and otherwise render what little service I can to the cause. Yours truly,

C. S. GOVE.

Organization the Soul of Success.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The Blade has come to me since the mergement with it of Heald's Higher Science, of which I had long been a delighted reader and whose astronomical theory I so much approved that I almost became a convert to the Heald idea of the "Procession of Planets," barring only a few points which were inexplicable to me, and which I have not here time nor space to point out. During the life-time of Mr. Moore I exchanged papers with him (I was then engaged in the publication of a radical reform journal in this city) and no "exchange" came to my table that was more eagerly awaited and sought for than the Blue Grass Blade. I may say, en passant, that for forty years I have been engaged in publishing and printing liberal literature, among others the following journals: The "Woman's Advocate," Dayton, Ohio, (devoted to "Woman's emancipation from religions, social, political and moral slavery." "The Nineteenth Century" (1870) a radical reform journal that "ripped the bolts and news" out of the "temples of superstition," known as churches. The Chicago Ledger, the only paper surviving the terrible conflagration of 1871, and for three days the only newspaper in that great city. The Pacific Liberal, San Francisco, Cal. in 1875-76, than which no more advanced journal along the lines of radical freethought was ever known on the Pacific coast. (See D. M. Bennett's "Sages, Infidels, and Thinkers," vol. 1 (1876) p. 1027, and Samuel Putnam's "Four Hundred Years of Freethought," pp 701-3.) I was the California representative of the Liberal League when that body was born, and

am a member still, its successor being the Secular Union and Freethought Federation. "The Mission Mirror," "The American Patriot," and others followed, and in 1895 I began and published for two years here in Washington, The United American, specifically devoted to the curbing of the political encroachment of that greatest of all the foes of the republic, political Romanism. So you see, I am a veteran in the army of Freethought in America, and hence may be pardoned for this egotistic reference to myself. It is, of course, intended more particularly for the eyes of the Blade's younger readers. Last Thursday I celebrated the 70th anniversary of my birth. Of course, too, like the reform workers, my life-work has left me a poor man, financially, but rich in the unbounded satisfaction of having contributed what I could to the emancipation of mankind from the thralldom of religious superstition—the one great curse of the earth!

The old Boston Investigator has done its good work and passed away. So have dozens of others, all along the past, but the Truthseeker and the Blue Grass Blade, and a few "lesser lights" remain to hammer away at the "dragon of death"—Religion. I feel thankful for all this, and can see hope for the future. Everywhere the darkness of superstition is fleeing away, and the rainbow of hope spans in splendor the heavens so long darkened by the infernalism of ecclesiasticism. Your editorials are splendid, and your recent work in Ohio will, I am sure, produce good results. I used to enjoy Mrs. Henry's writings in the Blade under the Moore management, and love them still. So Frantz, and Watson, and Roberts, and Northrup, and Dr. Bowles, and Jeffries and the rest—all write well. But the "noblest of them all" is Judge P. B. Ladd, of California. O, for a few more such scholarly, erudite writers! Religion's rotten remains would soon crumble into dust. And of Dr. Hausman—well, as long as he confined himself to the scientific, biologic and ethnologic phases of his subject, he did well; but with his definitions of political economy and industrial man, many of us must differ. However, I can overlook his efforts to demolish the theories of my old personal friend "Harry" George, and his seeming preference of German over American patriotism, because of the sledge-hammer blows the doctor gives churchianity and religion.

A word more, as to organization, and I will close this already too long letter. I

(Continued on page 13.)

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ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Blade will be discontinued at the expiration of the term for which the subscription has been paid up in advance. The address slip on the paper will show subscribers the date of expiration of subscription. Back numbers or numbers omitted will be sent, if asked for, upon renewal in case of discontinuance.

SHOULD ANY SUBSCRIBER change his or her address, advise this office, giving both old and new address, as desired.

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 P. O. Box 393, Lexington, Ky.

NEW ORGANIZATION CERTAIN.

The overwhelming and unanimous sentiment already expressed as in favor of a new national organization of American Freethinkers should be sufficient to remove all doubt.

As a result of the voluminous correspondence we have received on this subject, the responses made and the nature of those responses, together with the glad and universal acclaim with which the proposition has been received, impels us to the conclusion—

1. That the proposed meeting will be held.
2. That it will probably be held in St. Louis, as the larger number have so far spoken in favor of that city.
3. The date is yet undetermined.

We have so far published twenty-one letters. All favor the organization and none have spoken against. We have more than that number on hand awaiting publication. The latter, without a solitary exception, speak to the same end. The majority will not be able to attend the meeting, but a sufficient number of capable and earnest workers in the cause will be on hand to advise and suggest in the formation of its principles and its method of organization and propaganda. This would appear to insure success at the very outset, and the only practical thing remaining is the organization itself.

Giving a brief summary of the letters received we find that the 21 whose letters have been published, and we will not speak of the others until they are in print, all favor the organization and will become members thereof, provided it is made a Freethought organization pure and simple. Five of these have declared in favor of St. Louis as the place of meeting, with three in favor of Cincinnati, and two in favor of Cleveland. Eleven are indifferent. This leaves St. Louis with the larger number. Later expressions may change the above figures. As to the date it will be seen that the larger number favor the last week in October, but the Blade would advise that we be not too hasty in calling the meeting. Let us first determine upon whom and upon what we can depend, and then go ahead with the movement. In any event it should be held in time to prevent any interference with the business arrangements of our friends, for some are engaged in a line of business that is depending upon the trade of the coming holidays, so that in any event it should not be held later than the middle of November. In our next issue we have more definite information to give, and we trust that our friends will hold themselves in readiness for the proposed gathering.

From the expressions and sentiments given we may safely conclude that when any number of people demand a certain movement, it will be undertaken. We may strive in vain to start a bunch of cattle on a stampede, but if they take a notion to stampede on their own account, we find our own powers helpless to prevent them. Apply this homely simile to the present situation. American Freethinkers demand an organization. They have come to the conclusion that an organization is not only proper but altogether necessary. If they will but follow this up by making the organization a fact, then self-interest, no matter the source, will be powerless to prevent it. Once successfully organized, they will constitute a power in the republic for good. Such an organization will be a constant check to the pernicious influences of ecclesiasticism, and by a system of education in propaganda, it will do much to counteract the false systems now being taught by the church institutions.

Freethinkers who can are urged to attend the meeting. Come well prepared with suggestions and practical advice as to the detail of the organization, both as to structure and propaganda. Importance will attach to its principles, its system of acquiring membership, eligibility for membership, its financing, the number and duties of its officers, and its method of propaganda, including the character of propaganda in which it is to indulge. Exceeding great care must be exercised in these matters lest we fall into the same groove, or channel, that has brought ruin and disaster to previous efforts of this kind. The outline we have already furnished will be food for thought. Taking these as a base for our operations we can formulate an acceptable platform and win to our cause many of the thousands who are

outside the church and its ramifications. We must be careful to avoid burdening the organization with isms that are foreign to the purposes and objects of an organization of Freethinkers. Gathering information from past experience, we are in a position to-day to know what to adopt and what to avoid.

In any event we should not be too hasty. There is no need for any particular hurry. We can take our own time and think over the subjects to be considered and dealt with. Our minds will then be fully prepared for the important step we are about to take. Let this organization once get fairly launched and it must know no such thing as failure. There is plenty of work before it. It will need those who are capable of leading, and leading right, and it will need those who are willing to work and to help. Its membership ought to include many thousands, which can be won, if we but do our duty.

Let every earnest Freethinker, whose heart is in the right place, and who loves humanity, resolve to be with us, to work with us, and to stay with us always.

More definite information regarding the meeting will be given in our next issue.

ON THE FIRING LINE.

The battering rams of logic and the ballistæ of reason are again hammering at the decaying bulwarks of the orthodox Christian faith, and it is an indisputable fact that it will not be much longer able to withstand these continued assaults.

Nor are these attacks the result of any concerted plan of action, for they emanate from entirely different sources, having their origin and finding their strength in the innumerable observations, independently taken, of human society as it is to-day and contrasting them with the conditions of human society as they were in the past. These observations have led to the intelligent conclusion that just in proportion as myth, miracle, beliefs in gods, blood atonements, and crucified saviors lose their hold upon the people of any country, social improvements set in and a comparative peace prevails. But so long as religion, with its dogmas and doubt, can exert any influence whatever upon the public mind, social degradation ensues and communities are fraught with dissensions arising from most trivial causes.

We have made an extended comment upon the work of Harold Bolee in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, and in those comments we have hinted that other writers of equal force and other magazines are taking up the same line of work, until to-day it would be considered as something out of the ordinary and unusual if a magazine of any importance should omit the publication of an article bearing upon these issues. The *American Magazine*, of the September issue, contains a strong article by Ray Stannard Baker upon the

"Faith of the Unchurched," wherein the prevailing orthodox system of religion is accorded a serious overhauling. While not so strong or forceful as the work of Harold Bolee, the article in question is a direct assault upon the integrity and purpose of the churchmen, their lack of toleration toward those of a different faith, or of no religious faith, and as these kind of articles are multiplying at a rapid rate, they are bound to create both suspicion and doubt in the public mind.

Side by side with criticisms of this character one may perceive in the columns of the secular press a growing tendency to discuss matters of religious belief, and disbelief, with greater freedom than they did a few years ago. Many of the latter, in order to curry favor with the orthodox element of human society, still declaim in favor of the old superstition, but the majority do not hesitate to furnish facts with able comments upon the situation. Thinking people will welcome these liberalizing tendencies. They demonstrate that the serpents of superstition can no longer coil about and crush the independent thinker, but that natural facts alone are in public demand. Priestly misrepresentation will not be accepted as infallible finalities. The ancient sacredness accorded to the church does not figure in present methods and modes of thought. Age is not permitted to give irrevocable sanction to practices inculcated by a savage and barbaric past. Tradition is not now accepted as historical fact. Earth is conceded to contain more of promise than any fancied heaven. Men have risen superior to gods. Men have accomplished what gods were unable to do. The day of mental liberty is upon us, and in this great achievement the glorious army of liberty's advocates find the fruition of their years of patient toil and sacrifice.

Accepted statistics demonstrate that the church is not keeping pace with the growth of population. This would suggest, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the church is losing ground. The cause of this is not that the church is getting away from the people, as some writers seem to imagine, but that the people are drawing away from the church. Every year records the building of new churches at great cost, but the congregations are growing thinner. Remaining members, who may really try to be honest in their beliefs and pretensions concerning the orthodox faith, experience innumerable doubts which induce serious questionings. The doubts increase and faith becomes weakened.

Everywhere are abundant signs of intellectual progress, and the more widespread and the higher our methods of education become, religious weakening grows more and more manifest.

The soldiers in liberty's army draw nearer the firing line every day. And almost every day witnesses a volley of unanswerable argument hurled at the orthodox foe. The latter is unable to reply in kind, and the best they can do is to utter a feeble protest and beg for the privilege of a

truce. But liberty knows no truce and will agree to none with the forces of reaction and stagnation. Onward, forward, is made the battle cry and the day of orthodox dismay is nigh.

THE CHURCH HAS CEASED TO GROW.

Although church statistics are, as a rule, exceedingly unreliable, we may safely infer that no sect or denomination will furnish figures to the census takers that are overwhelmingly against their own interests, but will strive at all times to make the best possible appearance and indicate a sectarian growth in common with other and opposing sects, and in due proportion thereto.

Every few years the several denominations furnish estimates of their strength, which include membership, church buildings and the number of preachers employed. One of these combined estimates, which includes all sects, has just been sent out by the census bureau, labeled as a "census of religious bodies," but inasmuch as the figures given had to be taken from the leaders of the various religious bodies and were not secured upon direct and positive information, due allowance must be made for the many extravagant claims by denominations and the evident desire to appear as numerically strong as possible. Practically speaking, there is but a trifling departure from the old methods appearing in the new bulletin and the figures do not appear favorable to modern Christianity.

From the bulletin we find that the total church membership of the United States, in the year 1906, amounted to 32,936,445, or approximately 33,000,000. Considering the fact that the population is now nearly 90,000,000, and accepting the estimate as approximately correct, we observe that 50,000,000 in America are not church-goers, or members of churches, leaving the Christian superstition in a decided minority. This ought to suggest to the faithful the necessity of missionary work at home and less attention to proselyting abroad. One of the most potent causes of this disparity between population and church membership is to be found in modern methods of education and the growth of the higher educational systems now in vogue in the public schools. Faith can not exist side by side with practical knowledge. Education submits all questions to the mind upon scientific methods. The reasoning and thinking faculties are thereby stimulated and the educated, the really educated, find little favor for superstitious creeds. We do not imply that all educated men and women are outside of the church, but we do insist that the majority of them are. Many who are educated still prefer to believe because it pays them well to make such a pretension, or profession, but by far the great majority of church members have never been brought in contact with the higher education; they do not want it, and prefer to remain in

their present mental rut and believe, than to receive a higher education which would lead them into disbelief. But with the coming generations things will be different. It will be impossible to thrust church creeds and beliefs upon future generations and the figures now before us clearly indicate that the tide has set in against the church.

One peculiar feature appearing from the statistics now furnished is, that while they show a general stagnation of church activity, the Roman Catholic church is accredited with an enormous increase. This would suggest, and must suggest, that Protestant denominations are constantly losing ground. It is given out that the Catholic and Protestant organizations in America show the following numbers:

Protestants	20,287,742
Catholic	12,079,142

Total32,366,884

These figures, taken from the bulletin, show 569,561 less than its original total estimate, although there is an intimation this margin represents a membership in and belonging to some other so-called religious bodies, and admitting this as true, Christianity has no right to claim them.

One of our readers expresses unnecessary alarm because of the rapid growth of Catholicism. While it may be true that the Catholic organization can boast a larger increase than its Protestant relatives, that increase comes not from within but from without. It is due almost solely to immigration. Thousands of ignorant foreigners still flock to our shores. The majority of these come from Spain, Italy, Ireland and other strongholds of Catholicism. These were Catholics before coming to America, and the vast majority remain Catholic after they get here. Hence, while the Catholic church shows an increase of membership in America, it must show a corresponding decline in other countries and can not be regarded as a healthy growth of that institution. Whatever dangers may exist, so far as America is concerned, from Roman Catholicism, lies in the number of votes it can dispose of in a given political contest, and as a consideration therefor demands political concessions in its own behalf. Even the very bulletin we are now considering betray the ear-marks of the priesthood and an inclination to make the Catholic church appear in the best possible light, compared with other Christian denominations.

But what can Freethinkers detect in the figures given? Simply that a vast population of more than 50,000,000 is in America, outside of the church, awaiting for an effective propaganda on our part to make them opponents of the church, instead of indifferent and passive individuals. Here we have a vast field for our operations. No stronger argument could be made in favor of the proposition to organize and get down to real and effective work. As we have

said, the harvest is here for our reaping, and what shall we do with it?

GENESIS NO LONGER BELIEVED.

"I guess nobody takes the opening chapters of Genesis literally these days," says Rev. T. S. McWilliams, pastor of the Calvary Presbyterian church at Cleveland, Ohio, but in the utterance of that simple truth the reverend gentleman undermined the authenticity and alleged inspirational truth of the entire book.

When one minister can, with impunity, question the veracity and literal truth of any part or portion of what they are pleased to term "holy scripture," then the same right must be conceded to any other person to question and reject any other part or portion. Nor is this privilege accorded to the clergy alone, for in its very nature it is a right common to all humanity. The only method by which any man or woman can obtain a correct idea of the teachings and character of the Bible is to read and investigate it for themselves. Granting this right then it exists as to any chapter and book. It can not be limited to one portion and denied as to another. Exceeding few people take Genesis literally in these days and there are increasing numbers who reject the doctrinal new testament as well as the allegorical old testament.

When the contents of any book is found to be at variance with known truth, our clear duty is to turn to the truth and cease to regard the book as final and authoritative. Any institution that is built upon a book must fall with the book. All books are of human origin. They simply record the ideas and beliefs of the writer, when other than history is given. In the latter instance we find many histories tintured with individual opinion in the relation of a supposed fact, which impairs the value of the book and renders its narrative almost useless as a guide to the student.

By throwing overboard the "opening chapters of Genesis," this particular clergyman has undermined the entire fabric of Christianity. His statement came in an expression of approbation of the ordination of George A. Fitch, by the New York Presbytery, after he had refused to express a belief in the virgin birth and had uttered his doubts about the historical identity of Adam and Eve. As the garden of Eden story is the whole foundation upon which the structure of the Christian superstition was built, it would follow that when the foundation is removed the structure must fall. If Adam and Eve had no historical identity, then Adam did not fall. If there was no fall, the Christian scheme of redemption must be a huge fake. If the scheme of redemption is a fake, there can be no necessity for a redeemer. This is the end of the Christian religion. Crucified saviors are abolished. Resurrection and ascensions become figments of the imagination. Divine mediators with a supposed creative deity are thus placed

on the shelf of antiquity. So believing, as Rev. McWilliams leads his readers to believe, common honesty would compel him to relinquish the advocacy of a superstition that can do humanity not the slightest good.

It is no argument to say that the Christian religion may be wrong, but it is a beautiful belief and ought to be sustained. There is no beauty in a lie. There is no beauty in deception, and when that deception is the result of intention, purpose and premeditation, the injury is magnified a thousandfold. Truth alone is beautiful. Only truth is deserving and worthy. Only truth is capable of leading humanity to higher and nobler conceptions of life and duties. Religious error increases the burden and wears out the traveler before his time. It is a priestly parasite without a single excuse for its existence.

Continued criticisms of the Bible, such as the one we have quoted and discussed, will be bound to result in overwhelming disaster for the Christian church. This may not be intended or desired by those making use of them, but the result will be the same. It may not come this week, or next, but it will come, and little by little the preachers are aiding, unconsciously, perhaps, in the work.

Since our former announcement that we would send sample copies free for one month to names and addresses furnished us by Blade readers, we have received several lists and much good has been done. Our friends are in a much better position to know people in their own vicinity of liberal tendencies than we are, and a few minutes work in the preparation of a list of their names, will not take much effort on your part, and it will help the Blade to get into many more homes. This offer is permanent. It is made with a view of getting more people interested in the Blade and the cause it advocates. Those who have not yet sent in a list are now urged to do so, and our circulation will probably be largely increased as a result.

A LAST APPEAL.

Before another issue of the Blade reaches its patrons, many of them should be on their way to Columbus to attend the convention of the Buckeye Secular Union. Date, September 12. There is a better prospect for a good attendance than ever before. The program promises many good things, and there is no reason why the social features should not be a source of a long list of pleasant memories.

There is great ferment in "the spiritual world." The brains of the country are coming our way. Let us get together and prove that the Buckeye Secular Union is a haven worthy of their acceptance.

With but two objects, viz: "To expose the fallacies of so-called revealed religion, and to oppose the union of church and state," and with the scope of its work limited to "such discussions and lectures and the distribution of such literature as will tend to the furtherance of the above-mentioned objects;" there is no reason why every advocate of religious Freethought should not join in an effort to make the next convention of the association a brilliant success.

LOU LAWRENCE,
Secretary B. S. U.

TO LECTURE IN THE WEST.

Beginning about the middle of November next, the Editor of the Blade will undertake a lecture tour of one month or six weeks in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma, calling in Indiana on the return journey. To make a traverse of the States named our appointments must necessarily be few, and friends desiring lectures are requested to communicate with the editor, at once, concerning dates, subjects, etc. Provided the new organization, as proposed, comes into existence, by that time, we also propose to lay it and its principles before the people and embark in what might be called a regular campaign for Freethought. To make this trip a success dates must be completed as early as possible and for this reason an early correspondence is solicited.

It has been a long time since a Freethought lecturer has been heard in the territory named. The clergy have been having things pretty much their own way. The people have been prevented from hearing the other side and their minds filled with prejudice instead of furnishing them with an opportunity to form an independent and personal opinion. To make these lectures successful we must depend on our friends. Come, let us reason together and start the Freethought ball rolling once more.

EDITORIAL POTPOURI.

By the time this issue of the Blade is in the hands of a large number of its readers, the Buckeye Secular Union Convention will be in session; will have met, adjourned and indulged in the wholesome good cheer such gatherings bring to those who are fortunate enough to attend. Circumstances, not altogether unforeseen, have prevented the Blade's editor from attending it. Realizing, however, the unselfish and patriotic motives that animate and move the hearts and minds of its officers and members, we speak for it an unparalleled success and express the hope that it will be able to extend its work.

We wish to get our readers interested in a campaign for new subscribers to the Blade. The fall months are rapidly approaching and we are anxious to get the Blade into more hands. If our friends will but put their shoulders to the wheel our circulation could be doubled in thirty days. In order to do what we can to reach the desired end, new subscriptions will be received at the rate of one dollar each, with the understanding that renewals remain at the regular price. The Blade being a weekly paper this means fifty-two papers for one dollar, less than two cents each. Now, then, is the accepted time to get busy.

Ever since the priesthood invented heaven and hell they have been unexcelled money makers and not one of them can describe their location by metes and bounds. In spite of almost infinite inquiry at Sybil caves, the patient poring over half-articulate prophecies, these still hover indefinite in the great inane, mere drifting Delos which no scientific Jupiter can fix with latitude and longitude.

While Dr. Cook has been able to reach a point on the earth's surface where all about him, in every direction he looked, was

sonth; and while he may be able to contribute valuable acquisitions to science; and should the new territory belong to the U. S. we will give our share to anyone who is willing to pay the taxes.

Theology reduces the mind to a mere machine which grinds no grist for the hungry multitude; and theologians strive painfully to blast the fruitful fig tree in humanity's vineyard.

Gods come and gods go, but only the Man in the Moon remains to look in silent and serene majesty upon the ruined altars of human love and the deserted fanes of human hope, blasted by the withering touch of superstition's fleshless fingers.

Rev. T. R. Courtice, of where we know not, in a two-column article published in the Little Valley (N. Y.) Hub, undertakes to prove the sacredness and duty of Sabbath observance from bible authority. His first ground is that god is recorded as having rested from his arduous toil of world making on what is sometimes designated as the "seventh day" and sometimes as the "seventh period;" again on the alleged life of Jesus, and third from the so-called "Apostolic life." Like the Frenchman and his rabbit, Rev. Courtice must first catch his god and prove him, thus endeth the first lesson. In the next place there was no actual "life of Jesus" and, therefore, his second argument falls. Lastly, as the "apostolic life" is now regarded by all intelligent beings as a monstrous sacerdotal fake, his entire "authority" lacks even plausibility, and his effort is reduced to a mere waste of words.

Most Christian believers imagine themselves rich in heavenly blessings, not from what they have earned and stored up, but by merely counting over the riches and idle indolence of others.

Recent church statistics show that the proportion of women members far exceed that of men. Doubtless these females expect that in the hereafter they will become angels with two pair of reversible wings and be given strips off the aurora borealis for a hat ribbon.

Could Jehovah but have foreseen the mental caliber and make-up of his devoted followers at the beginning of the twentieth century, he would never have given old Noah a hint to get in out of the wet.

The Blade wishes to see more women with the moral courage to cast aside superstition's yoke; it wants to see mothers who would rather be queens of their homes than the favorites of fashionable society; it wants to see more real men and fewer dudes.

The hope of the future lies in the union of all the mighty forces that make for progress, the real emancipation of mankind. This means a union of practical philosophy and sound science, a union of reasoning, thinking, intelligent men and women.

Preachers make the mistake of asserting that whatever pleases the people, unless sanctioned by themselves, originated in perdition. As the whole is greater than a part, so is it wiser. Piety becomes the most offensive when it insists upon preventing other people from enjoying themselves.

BLUE GRASS BLADE.

(Continued from page 7.)

THEY ALL FAVOR ORGANIZATION.

regard organizations as the soul of success in any earthly undertaking, and the lack of it as certain failure. Organization is all that Freethought (or Secularism, as I prefer to term our work) has ever wanted. The reason, too, is plainly to be seen. The masses who let one or a few do their thinking for them, are easily organized, because, having no minds of their own, they readily follow any "bell-wether" that essays to lead them. The freethinker likes to think and act for himself. Yet, Rationalists should get together, determine upon a set of general, broad principles that all can approve, as we do in the matter of our country's Constitution, and then work along local lines, as in our states, for detail work. Issue a new anti-ecclesiastical Declaration of Independence—that gotten up by Harold Banning is just the thing—and adopt this general motto as the slogan of our party: "In the thorough and complete secularization of the state alone lies the hope of the republic." If we do this, a new American political party—so imperatively necessary at this time—will eventually be built up upon it; and by getting rid of religion in state affairs and forbid all appropriations and support of the churches from the government, the religious monster will perish from its own innate rottenness. In this way alone can we overthrow the religious conspiracy against human liberty.

ANDREW JACKSON BOYER.

Washington, D. C.

Substitute for the Church.

NORGE, VA.—No doubt after a stillness of five or six years you will be a little surprised in receiving this. But when I tell you that I have been dead or supposed to have been dead to the moral interest of mankind for some time and give you my reasons for same possibly you will overlook my indifference.

On several occasions, as I have journeyed through life and came in contact with the superstition, ignorance, inability to reason, and the persistent stubbornness towards common sense and true logic in my fellow man, I have become so disgusted that I have said the whole shooting match could go to H—and stay there so far as I was concerned. But as I journey along I find it impossible to maintain my position and be true to my convictions—Hence this letter.

Some twenty-five or thirty years ago I had impressed on me the plan and working for a church of truth, which I suggested to our departed Bro. C. C. Moore, some ten or twelve years ago which he, at the time,

in a personal letter approved, but criticized in the Blade.

Now, what I want to say is this: That I believe the time has been ripe for some time for such a church; a church wherein people are taught how to live better and happier lives, where you could not change the nature of mankind so much, but where conditions would be changed to make the rising generation a better and happier people. I can better illustrate what I mean by giving you a little history of my own life and that of my family: When my daughter, who is now twenty-two years of age, was a little girl I used to move quite a little, principally to keep from paying rent. The first thing I did after unloading at our humble abode I would send the teamster to the river after a load of sand and dump it in the back yard for the little girl to play in. Then after I had set up the stove and the neighbors had brought in a few things and my good wife had prepared a meal we would call the little girl. Instead of coming in all covered with dirt she would come covered with clean bright sand, she would give her skirts a little shake and her mother would brush her hair and there she stood as bright and clean as a new dollar. Now I take the position if we want people to quit playing in the dirt we must give them a sand pile and this is what I believe my church of truth will accomplish.

I write this to you, knowing you are in touch with the feeling of Freethinkers and if in your judgment the time is ripe I would like to give my plan to some one who has the education and ability to organize or found same. I am aware 'tis only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous and my idea may only be the fanatical workings of a cranks' brain, inasmuch as my plan is as foreign to anything I have ever seen or read in the church line as the workings of Free Masonry is to the actions of a Catholic nun.

Inclosed please find check for which please send me the Blade as I feel lonesome out of the ranks.

Yours fraternally,

E. G. NICHOLS.

Will Try to Be There.

NATIONAL MILITARY HOME, O.—I say, by all means let the Liberals organize. I will be with them in any effort to that end. I think your plan a splendid one and it ought to be adopted. I know several Liberals here, with whom I have talked, and all are in favor of organization. I am sick in the hospital at present, but hope to be able to meet with you at Columbus on Sept. 12. Yours for organization.—JOEL M. BERRY.

Men do less than they ought unless they do all they can.—Carlyle.

A TRIP TO ROME.

(By B. O. Fenton.)

"Reforms are wrought by those who are in earnest."—Conway.

This valuable acquisition to Freethought literature has been tendered to me for perusal, and so eager was I to familiarize myself relative to the work of the Freethought Congress, I turned to the index, and, finding that it began on page 142, I proceeded at that point.

It is one of the most interesting descriptions of a great and worthy assemblage that I have ever had the pleasure of reading. It unmistakably demonstrates that the blood of Italian patriotism is fully aroused in defense of Liberty and that Garibaldi, and others, did not live and work in vain. In all ages the rights and liberties of man were trod beneath the feet of priests and kings, but through and by the efforts of the few, their power has been torn asunder.

The great and enthusiastic demonstrations made during the march to the monuments of Bruno and Garibaldi, should be given a careful reading by all intelligent people. The greatest man that lived, to my mind, Haeckel, gave his distinguished presence to encourage that great and fitting Congress of Freethinkers, at Rome, and while many other distinguished men of different nations were there and poured forth their eloquence, Haeckel was the "cap-stone" of them all.

There are many valuable details of history, and other events, other than those of the Congress, given in this book. These will be found of great interest to all who are not conversant with them. I might say, How long, Oh, how long, will man bend the knee and pray to an unknowable god and a mythical Christ and support an anathematizing priesthood, which have constituted the greatest curse to humanity in all the ages past and present? While those who have labored to broaden and expand the intellectual horizon of man, from Copernicus to Ingersoll, have been accorded the jeers and sneers of despots.

The author, Dr. J. B. Wilson, has brought his name among the imperishable of earth by his recording of these interesting details of a great and noble work, and no Freethinker can afford to live and die without reading "A Trip to Rome."

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Sloth (like rust) consumes faster than labor wears; the used key is always bright.—Franklin.

He bears misery best who hides it most.—Shakespeare.

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